

## **How did the Veterans History Project start?**

The United States Congress created the Veterans History Project in 2000. The authorizing legislation ([Public Law 106-380](#)), sponsored by Representatives Ron Kind, Amo Houghton, and Steny Hoyer in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senators Max Cleland and Chuck Hagel in the U.S. Senate, received unanimous support and was signed into law by President William Jefferson Clinton on October 27, 2000.

## **How is the Veterans History Project different from the National WWII Memorial's Registry of Remembrances?**

The National WWII Memorial registry is “an individual listing of Americans who contributed to the war effort” comprised of the names of those who sign up for the Registry of Remembrances as well as other official lists compiled by the American Battle Monuments Commission and War and Navy Department Killed in Service rosters.

**Donation of collection materials like interviews and/or memoirs is not a requirement for inclusion in the National World War II Memorial's registry.**

## **How can I get a copy of the Project Kit?**

The Field Kit (for interviews) and the Memoir Kit are both available online at: <http://www.loc.gov/vets/kitmenu.html> in PDF format. You may also order a printed version by filling out the online form at <http://www.loc.gov/vets/projectkitrequest.php> (please allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery).

The Veterans History Project is a project of the Library of Congress aimed at collecting oral history interviews, memoirs, letters, diaries, photographs, and other original materials from veterans of World Wars I and II, and the Korean, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf Wars and the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts (2001-present). Those U.S. citizen civilians who were actively involved in supporting war efforts (such as war industry workers, USO workers, flight instructors, medical volunteers, etc.) are also encouraged to contribute their personal narratives. Members of the public become part of the Veterans History Project after they donate their materials.

## **How can I be interviewed?**

While the Veterans History Project does not do the actual interviewing, our [Field Kit](#) provides the tools you need to conduct an interview yourself, or have a friend or family member do it with you. Also, many of our partner organizations do interviewing. Check our [List of Official Partners](#) to locate a partner near you.

The Veterans History Project also collects written memoirs. A special [Memoir Kit](#) is available with more information on creating a written record of your memories

### **Is there a deadline for submitting materials to the Project?**

No. The Project is ongoing; however, there is a sense of urgency to gather individuals' materials, so we encourage you to complete your project as soon as possible.

### **Help! I am a solo interviewer, or work with a small group, and have no extra funds to cover costs (blank audio or videotape, recording equipment, traveling to vets' homes, etc.). Can you help?**

The Veterans History Project can't provide funds, only interviewing tools. However, here are ways our other volunteers participants have found operating cash and supplies. 1) Hold a bake sale, car wash, rummage sale, or spaghetti dinner and use the proceeds; this involves the community, and can be fun. 2) Write a brief proposal of your plan-and how it benefits the community--for a local merchant or big chain store in your area like Radio Shack, Best Buy or Wal-Mart, or a service club like Rotary. Some stores can provide in-kind items such as blank audio or videotape, or recording equipment. Others have a little bank account for local good deeds like yours. Your promise to publicly thank the store or club can work wonders. 3) Seek funding from state humanities councils or foundations of private corporations. First, see what the criteria for funding are and what sort of proposal you need to prepare. 4) Large organizations with long-term goals can seek major grant funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Institute for Library and Museum Services (IMLS), and other entities. But their lead time is long, and there is lots of paperwork required.

### **What recording formats does the Veterans History Project accept? Are audio or video recordings preferred?**

Most audio and video recording formats are accepted (including but not limited to standard audio cassettes, VHS videos, Hi-8/8mm, digital video and DVD recordings); however, **please avoid using microcassettes for audio interviews**. Microcassettes pose significant challenges to long-term preservation and sound-quality of an interview.

If both audio and visual recording equipment is available to you, please keep in mind that visual recordings capture the interviewee's facial expressions, body language, and can be used to film photos and documents in addition to capturing the words alone.

Regardless of the recording format, please use the highest-quality recording equipment available to you. [Please see our Interviewing and Recording Guidelines for more information](#)

**Should I submit electronic versions of documents and photos as well as printed versions? What electronic formats are preferred?**

If you have documents in electronic formats as well as on paper, please submit both. Textual documents should be saved as either plain text (.txt or .rtf file extensions) or other commonly-available formats including Microsoft Word or WordPerfect formats. PDF files as well as TIFF, JPEG, and GIF formats are also acceptable.

If possible, please include a "hard copy" of photographic images: either original photos or high-quality, clear printouts on photographic or bond paper. This ensures the clarity of images and makes the items more useful to researchers.

**I have a website with my story of service - can I just send you the URL?**

No. Please send "hard copies" of any text or photos (an electronic copy on disk may accompany the paper copies). Originals of any photos or illustrations are also acceptable. Please provide the "raw" text and photos instead of printing a copy of the web pages.

This ensures preservation of the story separate from the web site, which may not always be available or accessible (URLs and web hosting frequently change). It also allows researchers to focus on the story without any additional formatting or extra links on the site.

By donating hard copies of materials, you create a physical archival collection that will become a permanent part of the Library of Congress.

**What information is made public in the Veterans History Project online database?**

The only information that will appear on the online Veterans History Project database are the name, date and place of birth, and service history information as it is given on the Biographical Data Form. Please review the database at

In addition, if a researcher visits the Library and uses a collection for research, personal information ( address, phone number, serial number, etc.) is censored on all Veterans History Project forms (i.e. Biographical Data Form, Audio and Video Recording Log, etc.) before being served. If a patron ever needs to contact a veteran (for copyright permission, for example), only the veteran's mailing address is given.

Protect your privacy by avoiding labeling items like tapes, memoirs, and photographs with personal mailing labels or social security numbers. Such labeling is generally not censored on collection materials, as this would compromise the integrity of the materials.

**Some of the names I search for in the Veterans History Project online database say "This collection is currently being processed by the Veterans History Project." What does this mean?**

Upon receipt, each collection is checked in and given an ID number in the Veterans History Project database. At that time, the veteran's name, birth date, and service history information as stated on the Biographical Data Form are added to the online display along with the note that the collection is "being processed."

Processing refers to preserving and organizing collection materials: placing papers in acid-free folders and boxes, ordering photographs and putting them in archival sleeves, labeling recordings and other materials and preparing them for permanent storage in our temperature and humidity-controlled, secured stacks at the Library of Congress.

Processing also includes descriptive cataloging of materials in the VHP database. Once a collection has been processed, it can be served to the public in the American Folklife Center reading room by appointment. [Please see our information about visiting the Library to view collections.](#)

Service history information is usually viewable online within 2 to 3 weeks of receipt of a collection. Most collections are fully processed and cataloged within 4 to 6 months of receipt.

**What happens to the material once it is received? How will my collection be used?**

Your collection will be added to the Veterans History Project's archives. Once it is processed and housed in a preservation environment, the veteran's service history information will be available online in our online database and the interview (or other materials) will be available to researchers who visit the Library of Congress. Prospective researchers will be able to review collections by registering for a Reader Registration

Card and visiting the Folklife Center Reading Room at the Library.

Some collections are also used by the Library of Congress for special presentations and events presenting and promoting the Veterans History Project.

For preservation quality purposes, we request that you send original recordings, photographs, and other materials. Please make any copies you wish to retain for yourself *before* submitting your recording, photographs, or written materials to the Veterans History Project.

**I have participated in the National WWII Memorial's Registry of Remembrances. Can I view this information through the VHP online database?**

No. The National WWII Memorial's registry is not connected to the Veterans History Project in any way. Both organizations participated in events during the WWII Memorial Dedication over the 2004 Memorial Day weekend, but they are not otherwise affiliated.

If you submitted your service information to the Memorial, please search the Registry of Remembrances on their web site at <http://www.wwiimemorial.com/default.asp?page=registry.asp&subpage=intro>. Please contact them at [custsvc@wwiimemorial.com](mailto:custsvc@wwiimemorial.com) or 1-800-639-4992 if you have questions about their organization or their Registry.

### **When will my name appear on the Veterans History Project online database?**

New names do not appear instantly in the online database; please allow the VHP staff time to properly preserve, house, and catalog collection materials (presently about 4 to 6 months from the time materials are received). Information contained in the database is based on participants' own reporting of their service history.

The current focus is on first-hand accounts of US veterans who served in World War I (1914-1920), World War II (1939-1946), or the Korean War (1950-1955), Vietnam War (1961-1975), Persian Gulf War (1990-1995), and the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts (2001-present). Those US citizen civilians who were actively involved in supporting war efforts (such as war industry workers, USO workers, flight instructors, medical volunteers, etc.) are also invited to contribute their valuable stories.

The Project greatly values and appreciates veterans' stories from additional combat arenas and those received will be processed as resources allow. Additionally, if you have materials or oral histories that fall outside the above-stated areas, please review this [list of related repositories](#) that also collect and preserve veterans' materials.

### **Is the Veterans History Project only interested in World War II?**

The Project collects first-hand accounts of US veterans who served in World War I (1914-1920), World War II (1939-1946), or the Korean War (1950-1955), Vietnam War (1961-1975), Persian Gulf War (1990-1995), or Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts (2001-present). Those US citizen civilians who were actively involved in supporting war efforts (such as war industry workers, USO workers, flight instructors, medical volunteers, etc.) are also invited to share their valuable stories.

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materials or oral histories that fall outside the above-stated areas, please review this [list of related repositories](#) that also collect and preserve veterans' materials.

**I'm not a military veteran, but I contributed to the war effort as a civilian. Do you want my story?**

Yes! The Veterans History Project collects stories and materials from the homefront as well as from the battlefield. Any wartime veteran or U.S. citizen civilian who was actively involved in supporting war efforts (such as war industry workers, USO workers, flight instructors, medical volunteers, etc.) has a story in which we are interested.

**Is the Veterans History Project only collecting oral histories?**

No. We collect personal narratives from wartime veterans and those who supported them. These stories may be recorded with a video camera or a tape recorder; however, they may also be typewritten (preferably a *minimum* of 10 pages). We also accept original collections of diaries, letters, maps, home movies, and photographs.

**After I send in my materials, may I send more materials at a later time?**

You are always welcome to send additional materials. Please be sure to include a note or letter indicating that you are sending an addition to your collection.

**What role do Partner Archives play in the Veterans History Project? How can my organization become a Partner Archive?**

Partner Archives are official Veterans History Project partner organizations that also serve as repositories for the interviews and materials they collect under the aegis of the Project. They help accomplish the goal of providing access to collection materials at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. and also around the country. To become a Partner Archive, repositories must comply with the following criteria and return to VHP a completed [Partner Archive Agreement form](#):

- provide free public access to these materials at their archive, at least 16 hours per week in a research environment
- provide permanent storage, preservation, safe handling, and security for their VHP collections, adhering to accepted collection management standards for original audiovisual, manuscript, and photographic collections
- fully complete the [Biographical Information Form](#) and any applicable material log forms and return these to the VHP. This information will be added to the Veterans History Project online database.

More information about VHP Partner Archives is available on the Partner Archive Information page at <http://www.loc.gov/vets/partnerarch.html>.

### **What does the Veterans History Project NOT collect?**

The Project is focused on first-hand accounts of veterans who served in World War I (1914-1920), World War II (1939-1946), the Korean War (1950-1955), the Vietnam War (1961-1975), the Persian Gulf War (1990-1995), or the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts (2001-present) and on US citizen civilians who were actively involved in supporting war efforts (such as war industry workers, USO workers, flight instructors, medical volunteers, etc.). The Project greatly values and appreciates veterans' stories from additional combat arenas and those collected will be processed as resources allow. VHP cannot collect 3-dimensional artifacts, such as medals, canteens, dog tags, helmets, uniforms, etc. A list of related repositories that accept artifact donations is available at <http://www.loc.gov/vets/relatedrepositories.html>.

### **Does the Veterans History Project verify the stories it receives?**

The Library of Congress does not verify the accuracy of these accounts. The opinions expressed in the interviews are those of the interviewee only and are made available to the public with his or her express consent.